

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 192253

62

ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/ECA:RELTZ:DB

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

ARA/ECA:RWZIMMERMANN

ARA:HWSHLAUDEMAN

PM: RJSLOTT

S/S:PSBRIDGES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 192253

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BR, US

SUBJECT: MESSAGE TO FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA RE
HOWITZER SALES

1. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED DELIVER FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM
THE SECRETARY TO FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA:

2. BEGIN TEXT:DEAR ANTONIO:

YOU MENTIONED TO ME IN SANTIAGO THAT THERE HAD BEEN
SOME PROBLEM RECENTLY IN SALES OF ARTILLERY WEAPONS TO
BRAZIL. AFTER A CHECK WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, IT
SEEMS YOU MAY HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO TWO BRAZILIAN
REQUESTS FOR REBUILT HOWITZERS.

FROM THE RECORDS HERE IN WASHINGTON, IT APPEARS THAT
THE FIRST TRANSACTION WAS BASED ON A BRAZILIAN REQUEST
DATING FROM OCTOBER 1974 FOR SIX REBUILT 105 MM HOWITZERS
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PAGE 02 STATE 192253

AND SIX REBUILT 155 MM HOWITZERS. THESE WEAPONS WERE

FOUND TO BE AVAILABLE AND OUR QUOTE LETTER OF OFFER UNQUOTE
WAS SIGNED BY THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT IN APRIL 1975. I
UNDERSTAND THAT DELIVERY WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE NEXT
SEVERAL MONTHS.

THE SECOND BRAZILIAN REQUEST WAS NOT RECEIVED UNTIL
AUGUST 1975 AND, AS OF JULY 15 OF THAT YEAR, THE DEPART-
MENT OF DEFENSE HAD SUSPENDED ACTION ON ANY NEW REQUESTS
FOR HOWITZERS PENDING A REVIEW OF THE EXISTING SUPPLY. IN
MARCH 1976, THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT WAS INFORMED THAT A
DETERMINATION HAD BEEN MADE THAT NO 155 MM PIECES WERE
AVAILABLE -- EITHER REBUILT OR NEW. IN APRIL, ALL
PARTICIPANTS IN THE U.S. FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PROGRAM
WERE NOTIFIED THAT THERE WERE NO REMAINING SUPPLIES OF
REBUILT 105 MM WEAPONS FOR SALE BUT THAT, ASSUMING
SUFFICIENT DEMAND, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WAS CON-
SIDERING NEW PRODUCTION OF THIS MODEL. BRAZIL HAS INDICA-
TED AN INTEREST IN PURCHASING 36 FROM THIS NEW PRODUCTION
AND WE EXPECT THAT LETTERS OF OFFER WILL BE SENT SOON.
THE PRICE OF THE NEW WEAPONS IS, OF COURSE, MANY TIMES
HIGHER THAN THAT OF THE SIX REBUILT 105 MM PIECES BOUGHT
BY BRAZIL, BUT REFLECTS INFLATIONARY FACTORS AND THE COST
OF TOOLING FOR THIS RELATIVELY SMALL-SCALE RUN.

FROM THE RECORD OF EVENTS, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT WE ARE
IMPLEMENTING OUR COMMITMENT UNDER THE LETTER OF OFFER
SIGNED IN APRIL 1975. WE WERE PREVENTED FROM MOVING TO
COMPLY WITH YOUR SECOND REQUEST BY THE SHORT SUPPLY SITUA-
TION WHICH HAD DEVELOPED BY THAT DATE, BUT I WISH TO
ASSURE YOU THAT BRAZIL WAS GIVEN EQUAL CONSIDERATION AND
TREATMENT WITH ALL OTHER INTERESTED COUNTRIES.

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTION ON THIS, PLEASE LET
ME KNOW. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE LOOK INTO ANY
SITUATION WHICH MAY SEEM TO EITHER OF US TO FALL SHORT OF
THE OPEN AND FRANK DEALINGS WE ARE STRIVING FOR IN OUR
RELATIONSHIP.

WARM REGARDS. HENRY A. KISSINGER. END TEXT. KISSINGER

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